

# Philosophy 3

## Critical Thinking

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### Today's Agenda

- Basic course information
- Why we are here
- What we will do
- How not to be sad
- Some basic concepts

### Course Information

- Text: *Simple Logic*.  
Daniel Bonevac. Oxford UP.
- Course Website: TBA
  - Syllabus available at:  
<http://www.philosophy.ucsb.edu/courses/websites-syllabi.html>

### Requirements and Grading

- 1st Midterm: 25%
- 2nd Midterm: 25%
- Final Exam: 40%
- Homework: 10%
- Students are expected to attend all lectures and one section each week.

## Why we are here

- “Critical thinking” via argumentation is part of an important tradition in philosophy. It remains the primary way that philosophers operate. Learning to think more clearly about argumentation is useful in virtually every academic discipline.
- Logic and the development of tools to evaluate argumentation are part of an important tradition in philosophy. The development of modern logic was an intellectual achievement of the highest order.

## What we will do

- Distinguish argumentative discourse from other things people do with language.
- Isolate the kind of argumentation and the special sense of “argument” in which philosophers are interested.
- Identify a subset of this kind of argumentation that philosophers made significant progress in understanding and evaluating.
- Learn to use some of the tools philosophers have developed as part of this effort, including the introduction of a formal language and a formal system of inference.

## How not to be sad

- Be prepared for a change of gears.
- Don’t fall behind.
- Be prepared to develop, and to be tested on, *practical* abilities.

## Distinguishing Argumentative Discourse

- The function of argumentative discourse is to resolve a difference of opinion.
- A difference of opinion arises when (1) one person takes a particular standpoint towards some issue and (2) another person does not accept this standpoint. This second person might remain neutral about the matter, or she might take an opposing standpoint. In either case, she expresses some doubt about the initial standpoint.

## Rules of Argumentative Discourse

- Not just any way of resolving a difference of opinion counts as argumentative discourse.
- Given the kind of resolution we want and how we want to get there, our argument had better be governed by certain (implicit) “rules”.
- One way of investigating these rules is to look at *violations* of them.
- There are a number of mistakes in argumentation, *fallacies*, that have been recognized in the logical tradition. As we work through these fallacies, we’ll be thinking about what rules might be violated by reasoning in this way.

## For Next Week:

- Read Bonevac sections 1.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4